

Touchstone

Surrey Earth Mysteries



SURREY EARTH MYSTERIES GROUP, 25, Albert Road, Addlestone, Surrey.

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Although our group has been operating for some years now, we have not previously produced a publication. This has been mainly because we are so few in number and it seems very difficult to find interested people in this area. Why this should be, when groups to the north and to the south of us are thriving, is still something of a mystery, though perhaps one which is of more interest to sociologists than to ourselves. However, we felt there must be a few more people in the county and the surrounding area who might be interested in earth mysteries, and when I mentioned this to Philip Haselton of the Northern Earth Mysteries Group at a recent moot in Scotland, he suggested that we start a magazine. This should, he said, through publications lists in other magazines, alert any in the Surrey area who may be unaware of our presence. In addition to this, we have made a few small discoveries during the course of our existence, and it would perhaps be a good thing to publish them in the semi-permanent form of a magazine.

We aim mainly to deal with earth mysteries in Surrey and to show that this county, which may seem rather mediocre on the surface, still teems with things of interest if the slightest amount of probing is done. However, as well as the local material we are also interested in articles of general interest connected with the subjects which have over the past years been brought together under the wide umbrella of earth mysteries.

We meet monthly at Addlestone near Weybridge in Surrey, and anyone interested in any or all of the earth mysteries subjects is welcome. These subjects range from the central ones of leys, earth energies, dowsing, terrestrial zodiacs etc., to more peripheral ones such as ghosts or UFOs, and sometimes other subjects entirely, for our meetings are completely informal. If you live within a reasonable distance of Addlestone, please contact me for the date of the next meeting - we would very much like to meet you!

Jimmy Goddard.

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LEY LINES - JUST A COINCIDENCE?

by Richard Pywell

If you look at a map and discover that a number of interesting features - say churches - lie on a pretty good straight line, are you to conclude that there must be some underlying system, or is it mere chance?

To answer this we can construct a statistical treatment which takes account of, firstly, how closely the church lies on the line, and secondly, what is the density of churches in the area. The best way of checking the line is to visit the area, but trees or terrain can often prevent you seeing one church from another. On Ordnance Survey maps the church is at the centre of the cross symbol, but there is a certain error of positioning. To allow for this, starting with our specimen "ley" line, first draw a line each side of it, let us say at a distance of $1/20$ Km away from it. All churches within these two lines are then assumed to be on the line. Secondly draw another pair of lines, one each side of the original at ten times that distance. This pair of lines will then be 1 Km apart. Next decide where the line begins and ends - for example, at the first and last church on the line. Count the number of churches within the first pair of lines. This is the number you decide are "on" the ley line. Let us say this number is nine. Then count the number within the two lines 1 Km apart. If this comes to 90, then obviously this is exactly what you would expect from chance, since there is ten times the area between the lines. But if it comes to twelve - that is, there are 9 churches within the first pair of lines and only 3 outside them, that is a very different matter. You've found a ley line.

The mathematical formula for calculating the odds against chance is unfortunately rather complicated for this application, so it is not given here. Anyone interested please contact me. I applied the formula to a number of test cases, and here I give the results in two selected instances:

1) Line-up of two tumuli on Wisley Common

This line passes through churches at Cliddesden, Greywell, North Warborough, Pilcot, Fleet (2), Brookwood, Pyrford, Cobham, Oxshott, Malden, Rushett, Sutton, Carshalton, Wallington (2) and Croydon. The odds against at least 16 churches out of 52 being found within narrow lines is 1 in 8250.

2) Line-up of St. Anne's Hill and Chertsey Abbey

This line passes through churches at Virginia Water, Hersham, Esher, (3), Chessington (2), Ewell and Kenley. There were 20 churches within half a kilometre of the line. A score of 9 churches out of 20 gives odds of 1 in 2410.

These are remarkably long odds when you consider that scientists normally adopt a rule of 1 in 20 for eliminating pure chance.

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SOME SURREY STONES

by Jimmy Goddard

Surrey is usually thought of as a rather built-up suburban county, but this is not entirely true, and we do have a fair amount of ley interest within our borders. Among these sites are a number of enigmatic stones which have survived in sometimes surprising places.

1) The Pyrford stone. This stone, which was unfortunately moved from its original position in the middle of a road junction, now stands at the entrance to Pyrford Place. It is thought by local archaeologists to be an ancient standing stone, but no alignments have so far been found to pass through its

original site. It is incised with a cross, suggesting Christianisation of a "pagan" stone.

2) The Wisley stone. This is a flat, irregularly-shaped stone at the entrance to Wisley church. It is on a very good alignment passing through St. Mary's, Byfleet and Newark Priory - this ley has been thoroughly investigated by the group. At Wisley church there is a beautiful Watkinsian visual alignment in which church, stone, path and St. Mary's, Byfleet (on the horizon) can all be seen to be in alignment. There is a theory that the stone is a meteorite, but this is unlikely as it seems to be composed of some kind of sandstone.

3) The Horsell stone. This is a beautiful inclined stone near a stream on the main path across Horsell Common. There is a possible alignment from nearby Danewell Hill (a good hilltop clump) although this is not very spectacular on the map. We have so far not been able to find out anything about this stone - it is not even marked on the Ordnance Survey map.

4) The Tolworth stone. This is the biggest enigma of them all - is it ancient or a Watkinsian "mare's nest"? It is a very rough block of stone standing alone near the base of the immense Tolworth Tower, in line with one of its walls, a stretch of the road to Ewell and Ewell church. It is a somewhat surprising sight in such a built-up place. It was erected in 1964 when the tower was built, but on investigating further from the Planning Department it was found that it was actually dug up on site when the foundations for the tower were being dug, and erected in its present position because "it looked nice there"! Could it be an ancient stone which fell, became buried and was then rediscovered? If so, it is an amazing case of subconscious siting. The alignment goes through several churches, most of them not ancient, but of course this may not matter if subconscious siting was in effect.

5) The Haslemere stone. This is a recumbent stone now broken, in a churchyard in Haslemere, mentioned at a recent meeting by group member Gordon Spinney. Astonishingly, there is still a practice of placing flowers on the stone.

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THE MYSTERY OF THE DEW POND

by Paul Baines

The dew pond is virtually an extinct feature of the English countryside and has also been rather neglected by those engaged in the study of Earth Mysteries. Dew ponds occur mainly in the chalk downs of Sussex and Wiltshire; the only known working example being near Chanctonbury Ring which has been restored and maintained by the Sussex Downsmen's Association. Many other dew pond sites exist but these are overgrown and cannot retain water due to leakage through the damaged clay beds. There is some controversy over the age of these ponds; some authorities believe that they first originated in Neolithic times whilst others claim that they only date back to the 18th-19th centuries. The latter is certainly true for some dew ponds since the art of dew pond building has been carried on until comparatively recent times (turn of the century).

The purpose of dew ponds was ostensibly to provide watering places for cattle and sheep, but investigations suggest that the original intention was

for some esoteric purpose. The student of Alchemy will know that dew was highly prized by the alchemists as being rich in etheric energy. It was collected before dawn and processed in such a way as to fix these subtle forces so as to produce an etheric medicine. The collection and processing of dew is depicted in the plates of the Mutus Liber or Wordless Book of the Alchemists.

From a dowsing point of view dew ponds are strategically placed. Guy Underwood states that dew ponds, like monoliths, "are always located within primary spirals, and mark important blind springs". The bank or rim formed from the excavated material has been shown to mark an aquastat spiral and the pond itself to mark an important water line terminal. If this is so, then the location of dew ponds bears a relationship to concentrated foci of Earth Force and the water therein would be rich in etheric qualities. It is interesting to note that the more recent dew pond builders advertised dowsing among their services. If these ponds were simply intended as watering places for cattle, why go to so much trouble in locating them?

The main source of water in dew ponds is from rainfall but the question which had puzzled investigators for years was how the ponds retained water during long, hot summers when the lowland ponds had long dried up. Investigations carried out by Commander E. E. Martin on the South Downs in 1908 are described in his "Further Experiments with Dew Ponds", from The Geographical Journal of Oct. 1910. An experimental pond made by Mr. Martin on Claydon Down, Sussex (unlikely to have been located by dowsing) showed a rise in water level on occasions when there was no rain. These rises were found to correspond to the existence of night fogs and early morning mists. It was suggested that the deposition of aqueous vapour on the surface of ponds is due to the electrical condition of the atmosphere. Since every mist particle is charged, the immediate surface of the Earth over which the mist drifts receives an opposite charge, which causes the mist particles to discharge. Thus the fall of mist particles is the result of their electrical discharge. This mechanism, however, could be applied to any open body of water. Mr. Martin was of the opinion that dew ponds were not fed by dew. It is felt that Mr. Martin's conclusions are not satisfactory since his experiments were carried out within the context of orthodox physics and that the findings of dowers had been disregarded. It is probable that there are mechanisms at work which have still to be discovered.

The mystery of the dew pond operation still remains as does the mystery of their purpose. It is possible that, like monoliths and tumuli, they were components of the Earth Energy Network for accumulating energy and that the water contained in them was possessed of healing powers. Such questions can only be answered by further research.

SURREY EARTH MYSTERIES GROUP meets monthly at 25, Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey. Please contact Jimmy Goddard at this address for the date of the next meeting. Field trips are arranged as requested.

SURREY EARTH MYSTERIES is an occasional publication published as material arises, without set publication date at the moment. Subscription is £1 for four issues, including postage.

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